



Hedged Performatives in English Political Debates

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Kavi Shakir Mohammed

College of Basic Education/ Salahaddin
University-Erbil
kavi.muhammad@su.edu.krd

Nyan Kamil Ghafour

College of Basic Education / Halabja
University
nian.ghafor@halabjauni.org

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Abstract

Political speeches have been dealt with from different angles from a long time. They have been regarded as an important part of rhetoric. Politicians or other public persons often use rhetorical devices to convey their thoughts and ideas. They have goals set in order to convince their listeners and persuade them to elect him/her. This is done through different linguistic devices like hedged performatives, which are the main concern of the paper. The paper aims at investigating the use of Hedged Performatives in political debate and knowing the effect of gender differences in using the devices and the most frequently used ones as well. To meet the aims of the paper, the final presidential debate between Clinton and Trump is selected and analysed. Depending on the results analysed, a number of points are found out as: probability is the main concern of the debate where no certainty is predicted from their speech, and most of the devices are used by Clinton more than Trump. Finally, at the end of the paper a list of references is presented.

KeyWords: Hedge, Hedged Performative, Political Debate.

1- Introduction

In the context of discussion- in any field- whether scientific, academic, political or an ordinary everyday speech, there are certain types of expressions used by the speaker called 'hedges'. They are used to reflect the uncertainty of a real or specific knowledge where claims are acknowledged as possibilities rather than certainties by the speaker. For that Yule (1996:130) describes hedges as words or phrases showing the speaker's uncertainty in a way that what (s)he says is totally correct or incorrect. Thus, they are attempts to hide communicative uncertainty for different purposes.

This paper attempts to explore 'hedged performatives' used in political debates and analyse the final (third) presidential debate between Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton during the US 2016's election cycle. The Presidential debates are one of the important ways for people to know about the candidates and compare their views. The candidates themselves have tried to stand out and differentiate themselves from their peers. Therefore, the primary concern of the paper is to investigate the use of hedged performatives in political discourse, to find out gender differences in using them, and the most frequently used devices of hedged performatives in the selected debate.

2. Theoretical Background

This section is devoted to give a brief overview about hedges and hedged performatives, their definition, pragmatic function and classification.

2.1 Hedges and Hedged Performatives

Hedges are set of particular terms or items used by the speaker/writer in different occasions and for different purposes through a particular structure. They can be found



frequently in different discourses. For this, one can find different definitions of 'Hedge' or 'Hedging' but in almost all of the cases, they are introduced to reduce the strength of what is said or written for different purposes.

The concept of 'Hedge' was firstly introduced by Lakoff in 1972 referring to words whose function is to make things more or less fuzzy, and that imply a number of interrelated concepts like politeness, tentativeness, uncertainty, lack of full commitment, indirectness, vagueness, approximation...etc. Brown and Levinson (1987) define a 'hedge' as a particular word or phrase that modifies the degree of membership that is partial, or true only in certain respect, or that it is more true and complete than perhaps might be expected. For example:

- 1- I *rather* think it is hopeless.
- 2- I am *pretty* sure I have read that book before.
- 3- You are *quite* right.

In relation with Gricean Maxims of Cooperative Principle and illocutionary force, Brown and Levinson (1987) regard Hedge as a highly important resource for the understanding of politeness strategies. Moreover, Haliday and Hassan (1989:45, cited in Varttala, 2001) state that Hedging is a phenomenon that has usually been comprehended to play a part in the interpersonal function of language, through which the speech function like: offer, command, statement, or question, attitude and judgement embodied in it, and the rhetorical features that constitutes it as a symbolic act. For example:

- 4- I *mean I think* I am a *pretty* straight sort of a guy.

The expressions in italics can be seen as 'hedges' weakening the claim to plain speaking.

Verschuere (1999:193) defines 'hedges' as devices used in the content of direct proposition without the deviation of commenting on its condition (status) in attitudinal, epistemic or evidential terms that are equally indicative of meta pragmatic (means an awareness by a speaker of the intentions and effects of one's speech) awareness. For example:

- 5- *In a sense*, universities are just factories.

Moreover, Watts (2003) introduces hedge as linguistic expression that enables the speaker to avoid being too direct in his/her utterance.

In 'The American Heritage College Dictionary' (2004), hedge is defined as "an **intentionally** non-committal or ambiguous statement. Or it is a word or phrase, such as *possibly*, or *I think*, that weakens the certainty of a statement" (641). It is the same as Cruse (2006) when stating that Hedge is an expression which weakens a speaker's commitment to some aspect of an assertion as in the examples below:

- 6- She was wearing *a sort of* turban.
- 7- I have *more or less* finished the job.
- 8- *As far as I can see*, the plan will never succeed.

Yule (2006: 130-1) introduces hedges as certain types of expressions, "words, or phrases used to indicate that we're not really sure that what we're saying is sufficiently correct or complete", e.g. sort of, kind of, which are used for the accuracy of the statements as in:

- 9- His hair was *kind of* long.
- 10- The book cover is *sort of* yellow. (rather it is yellow)

In a general sense, Bloor and Bloor (2007:103) define it as "a linguistic avoidance of full commitment or precision. It is a vague but useful term covering a range of phenomena" existing in everyday language.

Therefore, one can see that the term 'Hedge(s)' has been differently defined and analysed from different perspectives but let us turn to the main concern of the paper, 'Hedged Performative' which is a way of widening the concept of Hedges.

A hedged performative is an indirect illocution whose illocutionary force is expressed directly by a performative verb but is given an illocutionary force by some devices, such as



modalization or subordination. Fraser explains 'hedged performatives' to imply the use of modals or semi modals which modify the illocutionary forces of performative verbs by stressing the inevitability or desirability of the locution. For example:

11- I *must* advice you to remain quiet.

12- I *wish to* forbid you to leave. (1975: 187-8, cited in Itani, 1995:16)

Similarly, Jacker & Taavitsainen (2008:72) clarify that hedged performative involve cases where the performative verb is within a subordinate clause, such as:

13- I *must/have to* ask you to clean the kitchen right now.

This syntactic structure is also reflected in all the cases discussed in the pioneering paper on hedged performatives by Fraser (1975). However, Jacker & Taavitsainen (2008:72) add that "Fraser is explicitly clear that a per- formative sentence is not simply a syntactic sentence type but a "set of syntactic and semantic properties" (1975: 188) that is being so, we decided to count as hedged performatives cases where the request force was semantically modified through the choice of performative verb. Verbs such as *beg*, *plead*, *crave* and *beseech* do not conventionally express the same power dynamics as verbs such as *demand*, *order*, *command* or *ask*. Rather, they "share the inherent property that the speaker is 'requesting' from a position of powerlessness, relative to the hearer" (Fraser 1975: 197).

Furthermore, Fraser divides 'hedged performatives' into 'strongly performatives' and 'weakly performatives' aiming to explain them, in his paper, for why certain sentences are strongly performatives while others are weakly performatives, as in the following two examples:

14- I *must* advice you to remain quiet.

15- I *wish to* forbid you to leave.

The first one is strongly performative in that "it is easily seen as counting as the act denoted by the performative verb in the sentence.". Meanwhile, the second example is a case of weakly performative in that its performative use is not clear". (1975: 188, cited in Itani, 1995:16).

It is worth mentioning that Leech, in his book 'The Pragmatics of Politeness', regarded Hedged Performatives as one of the pragmatic modifiers tending to soften directives as they contain various devices of indirectness to reduce the force of the "Pure" performative. "The pure performative is formal and quite rare in everyday discourse. It makes the illocutionary force of the utterance quite explicit, and its degree of (pragma linguistics) (impoliteness) depends very much on the meaning of the performative verb, for example: (I demand) is highly impositive, (I asked) is less so and (I beg/ entreat) is less so again." (2014:147-8).

2.2 The Pragmatic Function of Hedged Performatives

Hedging is used by speakers and/or writers to express certainty or uncertainty towards a speech/an utterance and to show the degree of confidence they assign to their claim. Thus, the truth value of an assertion is evaluated via using hedges, where writers allow their readers to do so. From the literature reviewed, 'hedged' and 'hedged performatives' are crucially important in communication as they may intentionally or unintentionally be used in both spoken and written language. Moreover, Hedged performatives are used in communication to make it more euphemistic and convincing. They are used for different purposes depending on the circumstance of the communication. Firstly, they can be used to maintain politeness in communication. Thus, they are introduced by Leech (1983) as devices of politeness,



especially when the hearer is a person of a high rank or has a higher authority than the speaker. They have to be used properly because the improper use of hedges fails to maintain politeness and leads to pragmatic failure. Thus, the formality of the performatives is evident in that they tend to occur in highly formalized activity types such as public debates, and court proceedings. Hedged performatives are used to reduce the force threatening potential of such direct performatives. For example:

16- *May I suggest...*

17- I would advise you...

- you may stay if you wish, Miss Mason. But, I'd advise you to get some rest yourself. (Leech, 2014:205).

Secondly, hedged performatives may be used for the purpose of mitigation which is described as "rhetorical devices, which soften the impact of some unpleasant aspect of an utterance on the speaker or the hearer" (Danet, 1980: 525). Moreover, Fraser states that mitigation is used "to ease the anticipated unwelcome effect" (1980: 344). Furthermore, Fraser explains that Mitigation is used, by the speaker, for the purpose of being polite, modifying the force of a speech act and adding that it is not hedging but hedging words that can contribute to creating a mitigating effect. Therefore, he finds it difficult to have a case where the speaker is speaking impolitely but having mitigated the force of the speech. Fraser believes that there are two basic types of mitigation: self-serving (driven of fear to cause discomfort to self) and altruistic (driven of fear to cause discomfort to others). Thus, according to him cases like 'congratulations or praise' cannot be mitigated because they do not have unwelcome effect, which is problematic to apply especially in intercultural communication perspective. Mitigation is thus used to reduce anticipated negative effect of a speech act, as Brown and Levinson also assert on the idea that politeness and mitigation devices, such as hedges, are used for avoidance of disagreement (1978). The "softening of the performative may be combined with other mitigating devices, such as the downtowners *just*, *perhaps*, and *not* . . . quite as in:

18- Councillor [name] *could I just perhaps request* that you *perhaps* don't make it *quite* so easy for any future break-ins." (Leech, 2014:165).

Finally, one can find that the speaker or writer may use a vague language due to different purposes such as being polite by making utterances less assertive (forceful/ insistent) by decreasing their exactness. Vague language can also be used when there is an understanding between speaker and listener / reader and writer or When (s)he wants to avoid answering a question or committing to a specific action or decision.

2.3 Classification of Hedged Performatives

A hedged performative is an indirect illocution where its force is uttered directly by using a performative verb but is given an additional illocutionary force by some device, such as modalization or subordination. Therefore, hedged performatives are classified into the following:

- 1- Performative verbs,
- 2- Modalization, and
- 3- Subordination.

2.3.1 Performative Verb

A performative verb is one which designates a specific speech act and which, if used appropriately, counts as the performance of the speech act. The verb is present but the speech



act is performed indirectly: In saying *I must apologize for my behavior*, the speaker is expressing an obligation to make an apology, but implies that the acknowledgement of that obligation is the same as an apology. In contrast, *I apologized* is a report, and *Must I apologize?* is a request for advice." (Greenbaum, 1992). For example:

19- I promise to be careful. (This example counts as a 'promise' to engage in).

Examples of performative verbs are: "ask, beg, beseech, command, congratulate, deny, deplore, declare, implore, and warn". A performative verb in a performative use can typically be accompanied by (hereby) as in:

20- I hereby promise to pay the sum of one hundred pounds. but
I hereby promised to do it. (Cruse, 2006:126).

Performative verbs can be used explicitly and implicitly as in the following example:

21- A/ I promise to cook you a meal. (explicit performative).
B/ I'll cook you a meal. (implicit performative). (Archer and Wichmann, 2012:36).

In example 21 A, the utterance is characterized by the use of a first-person subject, the simple present tense, indicative mood, active voice and a performative verb 'promise'. It is an explicit utterance that can be tested by the insertion of 'hereby' as:

22- I hereby promise to cook you a meal.

While example 21 B, is implicit as it does not employ performative verbs.

2.3.2 Modalization

Hedged Performative is an utterance where its illocutionary force is modified by some devices as "a full or marginal modal auxiliary" (Jucker & Taavitsainen, 2008:253), for example: would, should, must, may, might, or can. An example of marginal modal is the verb 'dare'.

Fraser (1975: 187) states that a hedged performative embraces a modal or a semi modal. It counts as the performance of the illocutionary act denoted by the performative verb. For example:

23- I must advice ...

24- I advise

The meaning of these two examples are not identical in that in the first one, the speaker has the obligation to advice but in the second the speaker is advising.

Quirk et al (1985) refer to hedged performative as a type of indirect speech act which involves an indirect performance of a speech act, even though a performative verb is present. For example:

25- I *must apologize* for my behaviour.

26- I *would like to thank* you for your hospitality.

27- I *can swear that* I locked the door.

28- I *am happy to inform* you that you have passed the exam.

In example 25 above, "the sentence merely refers to an obligation to perform an apology, but the implication is that the acceptance of the obligation is equivalent to the performance." (1985:805).

Similarly, in Salager-Mayer Taxonomy of Hedges (2007: 109-110) cited in (Fahad Al Rashady, 2012: 35) a form of 'strategic stereotypes' of hedges is presented, consisting of



seven structures, where a part of it can be regarded as a form of hedged performative. The presentation of modal verbs as *can, could, may, might, would, should ...etc* in addition to modal lexical verbs (i.e speech act verbs) that are used to perform acts of different degree of illocutionary force as *to seem, to indicate, to believe, to assume, to suggest, to tend, to argue, to appear, to think, to speculate, to propose, ...etc*. Furthermore, he introduced some other lexical items to be included in his taxonomy of hedges that can be part of hedged performative and called them adjectival, adverbial and, nominal modal phrases. For example: probability adjectives *possible, probable, un/likely*, adverbs *perhaps, probably, possibly, practically, apparently, presumably, likely, virtually...etc.* and nouns *assumption, estimate, claim, suggestion, possibility...etc.* Likewise, he considered 'if clauses' as 'if true', 'if nothing' as a form of hedges which can be regarded as hedged performatives according to definitions mentioned before.

Hedged Performative openings are presented by Leech in a way that the opening main clause softens in varying degrees the force of a performative by introducing modality and sometimes interrogation. He also adds that the hedged performatives are similar to pure performatives in which they tend to occur in formal, public settings, although they are less stilted than pure performatives such as:

- 29- *May I ask*, all these are in favour, please, to show their hands [pause] these against.... (spoken by the chair at the business meeting).
- 30- *May I beg* him to stop making political capital out of the health of the citizens of the capital and **contract** on the real issues? (from proceedings of the British Parliament).
- 31- *Could I ask*, Rotarian Jeff. Please to propose a vote of thanks. (at a Rotary Club). (2014:105)

These examples show the mitigating effect of a request for permission preceding the actual performative verb. The performative (I/we apologize) can be softened by turning it into a hedged performative by using a module expression as in:

- 32- I should apologize for canned soup, but I spent so long talking to Stanley this morning. (Leech, 2014:128).

Other hedged performatives have the declarative form with 'must or have to'. For example:

- 33- I must apologize for..... (this is expressing obligation)

Or the interrogative form with 'can/ may'. For example:

- 34- Can I apologize...?

Each conveys the implication that the speaker is willing and ready to apologize. But they do not actually enact an apology. Such as:

- 35- Once again I can only apologize on behalf of my clients for events that occurred. (Leech, 2014: 128)

2.3.3 Subordination

Leech et al (2001) define subordinate clause as a dependant clause which is part of another clause (an independent clause). It can be in different forms as: noun clause, adverbial clause, relative clause and, comparative clause. The following are examples of each type, respectively:

- 36- *What this country needs* is a period of peace.
- 37- *If you follow my instruction*, nobody will be hurt.
- 38- The man *who owes me money* lives in Australia.
- 39- Malcolm spends money faster *than he earns it*.

The adverbial clause- if clause- is considered a form of hedge performative because it shows uncertainty or doubt concerning a proposition. In this regard, Quirk et al (1985) state that sometimes 'if clauses' can be linked with tentativeness, but sometimes they are not.

3. Data Analysis

In the researches reviewed, much attention is given to hedging in relation to conversational rules as a mean to facilitate turn-taking, or show politeness, mitigating face threats and sometimes to convey vagueness. Hedged performatives are used for different purposes such as the speaker's awareness of something, and sometimes an ambiguous language is used to avoid being too direct. Being indirect is for the purpose of politeness with the listener. They may be used for convincing the listener of avoiding disagreement.

In this paper, the final debate of the American election campaign in 2016 between Clinton and Trump is analysed according to the hedged performatives used to show their purpose and their function in each of the quotations of their speech to know if they are used similarly or in a different way. The table below shows the category of the hedged performatives and their function in accordance with the situation used in the debate by both speakers:

	CATEGORY	Hedged performatives	Function
1.	Modal Lexical verb	(think, believe)	It shows the interpersonal function of the language to weaken the certainty of the utterance and it is a linguistic avoidance of full commitment or precision.
2.	Modal Auxiliary verbs	Will/ would Must should can could	-a kind of future planning/ possibility. - to show power and confidence. - advice/ obligation -Ability - general ability and/or possible action now.
3.	Adverbial	Rather, absolutely, just, terribly, actually, -probably, perhaps	-to add more information and strengthen the speech. - uncertainty
4.	Adjectival	-Possible, -pretty, -terrible	-uncertainty -show the degree of being true
5.	Phrase	A sort of, a kind of	To show uncertainty
6.	Subordination	If – clause	With tentativeness to show uncertainty or doubt

Table (1): The Category and the Function of the Hedged Performatives

Since the same hedged performatives are used by both speakers in their debate, the quotations are separated and analysed according to the types of hedged performatives shown in table (1).



In the selected debate, the first device, the 'Modal Lexical Verbs', used by both speakers are 'think' and 'believe' where Clinton used them 34 times, 29 times for 'think' and 5 times for 'believe', while Trump used them in 23 quotations, 20 times for 'think' and 3 times for 'believe'. It is worth mentioning that both speakers used this device for the same purpose to weaken the certainty of an utterance through the use of intentionally ambiguous sentences when the speaker is not sure about what (s)he says and the use of personal viewpoints as well. The following are examples of this device.

Clinton:

- 1- "..., I *think* when we talk about the Supreme Court, ..."
- 2- "I also *believe* that there can be and must be reasonable regulation."
- 3- "I *think* we need comprehensive background checks,..."
- 4- "There's other matters that I *think* are sensible that are the kind of reforms that would make a difference."
- 5- "..., I also *believe* there's an individual right to bear arms."
- 6- "I do not *think* the United States government should be stepping in and making those most personal of decisions."
- 7- "And I do not *believe* the government should be making it."
- 8- "I *think* that is an idea that is not in keeping with who we are as a nation."
- 9- "I *think* it's an idea that would rip our country apart."
- 10- "So I actually *think* the most important question of this evening, Chris, is, finally,..."
- 11- "So I *think* that this is such an unprecedented situation."
- 12- "And I *think* it's time you take a stand..."
- 13- "Well, he'd rather *believe* Vladimir Putin than the military and civilian intelligence professionals..."
- 14- "I *think* it makes the world safer and, frankly, it makes the United States safer."
- 15- "..., I *think* when the middle class thrives, America thrives."
- 16- "I *think* we can compete with high-wage countries, and I believe we should."
- 17- "So the plan I have I *think* will actually produce greater opportunities."
- 18- "I personally *believe* that the steps that President Obama took saved the economy."
- 19- "But I *think* it's really an important issue."
- 20- "I don't *think* so."
- 21- "I *think* it's really up to all of us to demonstrate who we are and who our country is."
- 22- "I *think* that's been proven."
- 23- "I don't *think* that is in our interest,..."
- 24- "... and I don't *think* that would be smart to do."
- 25- "In fact, Chris, I *think* that would be a big red flag waving for ISIS to reconstitute itself."
- 26- "I *think* he's right."
- 27- "..., I *think* a no-fly zone could save lives and could hasten the end of the conflict."
- 28- "... I *think* we could strike a deal and make it very clear to the Russians and the Syrians..."
- 29- "I *think* it's important to recognize that he has been criticizing our government for decades."
- 30- "... I do *think* it's one of the issues we've got to come to grips with."
- 31- "..., I *think* just the opposite."
- 32- "I *think* that's the smartest way to grow the economy, to make the economy fairer."
- 33- "And I *think* it -- you know, it's a difference that affects how we see the world and what we want to do with the economy."
- 34- "I *think* that we will be able to get entitlement spending under control by with more resources and harder decisions."

Trump:

- 1- "I *believe* if my opponent should win this race,..."



- 2- "...which I truly don't *think* will happen,..."
- 3- "I don't *think* we should have justices..."
- 4- "I would *think* that..."
- 5- "...I *think* it's terrible."
- 6- "Chris, I *think* it's..."
- 7- "I *think* I should respond to that"
- 8- "...I *think* is terrifying."
- 9- "And I *think* it's going down"
- 10- "well, I *think* I did a much better job."
- 11- "I *believe* it was her campaign that did it."
- 12- " ...I *think* they want either fame or her campaign did it."
- 13- "And I *think* it's her campaign"
- 14- "I *think* that it's been very well..."
- 15- "I *think* it would be a great gesture."
- 16- "I *believe*, Chris, that she got these people to step forward"
- 17- "..., I *think* the voters are seeing through it."
- 18- "I *think* they're going to see through it."
- 19- " ...I *think* they're going to see through it."
- 20- "I *think* what the FBI did and what the Department of Justice did,..."
- 21- "...I *think* it's disgraceful."
- 22- "I *think* it's a disgrace."
- 23- "I *think* we've never had a situation so bad in this country."

The second device used to indicate 'hedged performative' is 'Modal Auxiliary Verbs'. This one is used by both speakers differently for various purposes: to wish something for the future through using 'would', and 'will' for future plans. Furthermore; the speakers want to show an obligation or to oblige themselves as speakers and the government as well by using 'must' and 'should'. Sometimes, for the purpose of being polite with the audience, they do not use the lexical verbs only but, the modal auxiliary 'can' as well. The followings are their quotations:

Clinton:

- 1- "...What kind of opportunities *will* we provide for our citizens? What kind of rights *will* Americans have?"
- 2- "...and the kind of people that I *would* be looking to nominate to the court...."
- 3- "... I *would* hope that the Senate *would* do its job..."
- 4- "...what I *would* like to see is for people to come together and say: Of course we're going to protect and defend the Second Amendment."
- 5- "I *will* defend Planned Parenthood. I *will* defend Roe v. Wade, and I *will* defend women's rights to make their own health care decisions."
- 6- "You *should* meet with some of the women that I have met with, women I have known over the course of my life."
- 7- "And I *will* stand up for that right."
- 8- "We *will* not have open borders."
- 9- "We *will* have secure borders, but *we'll* also have reform."
- 10- "...It clear that he will not have the help of Putin in in this election,..."
- 11- "It's pretty clear you *won't* admit..."
- 12- "I *would* work with our allies in Asia, in Europe, in the Middle East,..."
- 13- "So the plan I have I think *will* actually produce greater opportunities."
- 14- "That's the kind of approach that *will* work."
- 15- "...but it is the kind of approach that *will* enable more people to take those new jobs,..."



- 16- "...I believe I *will* be able to do."
- 17- "*I'll* be against it after the election."
- 18- "*I'll* be against it when I'm president."
- 19- "But I *will* not support putting American soldiers into Iraq as an occupying force."
- 20- "Syria *will* remain a hotbed of terrorism as long as the civil war..."
- 21- "...we can have the kind of serious negotiation necessary to bring the conflict to an end and go forward on a political track."
- 22- "And you *will* see the dozens of sources which verify that he was for the invasion of Iraq."
- 23- "...it *would* help us with our fight against ISIS."
- 24- "...I *will* defeat ISIS..."
- 25- "I *will* not cut benefits"
- 26- "That *will* have dire consequences for Social Security and Medicare."
- 27- "...we *will* be able to get entitlement spending under control by with more resources and harder decisions."
- 28- "...I *would* like to say to everyone watching tonight that I'm reaching out to all Americans..."
- 29- "I *will* stand up for families against powerful interests, against corporations."
- 30 - "I *will* do everything that I can to make sure that you have good jobs..."

Trump:

- 1- "But these were statements that *should* never, ever have been made."
- 2- "I believe if my opponent *should* win this race..."
- 3- "They *will* be protecting the Second Amendment. "
- 4- "I don't think we *should* have justices..."
- 5- "...you *could* say by far..."
- 6- "We are going to appoint justices that *will* feel very strongly about the Second Amendment, that *will* not do damage to the Second Amendment."
- 7- "I *will* be appointing pro-life judges, I *would* think that that *will* go back to the individual states."
- 8- "...that *will* happen. And *that'll* happen automatically..."
- 9- "I *will* say this: It will go back to the states, and the states *will* then make a determination."
- 10- "I think I *should* respond to that"
- 11- " We *will* be doing very much better with Mexico on trade deals."
- 12- "You *would* have a disaster on trade, and you *will* have a disaster with your open borders."
- 13- "...that *would* be good."
- 14- " it must be followed."



15-“ And *I'll* tell you what, in particular in Chicago, people were hurt,...”

16-“...you *should* have changed the law,...”

17-“But I *will* tell you, I sat there.”

18-“I *will* look at it at the time.”

19-“ *I'll* look at it at the time.”

20- “...you *will* see millions of people that are registered to vote,...”

21-“ ..I *will* tell you what isn't fictionalized are her e-mails, where she destroyed 33,000 e-mails criminally...”

22-“ ...I *will* tell you at the time.”

23-“ *I'll* keep you in suspense. OK?

24-“ ...Iran *should* write us a letter of thank you,...”

25-“We *should* have -- wait one second.”

26-“I *will* do more for African-Americans and Latinos than she can ever do in 10 lifetimes.”

Adverbial, as the third device, is much less used in comparison to the other previous two devices. Moreover, it is much more used by Trump than Clinton but for similar purposes, to add more information to either the adjective or the verb of the sentence as ‘terribly unfortunate/actually produce’ and function as modifiers. The most frequently used is ‘just’, which is regarded as a mitigating device to reduce the negative effect of a speech to avoid disagreement with the other partner and to soften the impact of the unpleasant utterance on the hearer regarding the differences as well. The following are their quotations:

Clinton:

1-“And using that kind of scare rhetoric is *just terribly* unfortunate.”

2-“...he'd *rather* believe Vladimir Putin than the military and civilian intelligence professionals...”

3-“So the plan I have I think will *actually* produce greater opportunities.”

4-“...it *just* shows you're not up to doing the job.”

5-“...I *just* want everybody to go Google it...”

6-“ ...I think *just* the opposite”

Trump:

1-“But I feel that it's *absolutely* important that we uphold,...”



2-“...if we put another two or *perhaps* three justice on,...”

3-“ ...you can take the baby and rip the baby out of the womb of the mother *just* prior to the birth of the baby.”

4-“...what I *just* said, doing that, as late as one or two or three or four days prior to birth.”

5-“It's *just* pouring and destroying their youth.”

6-“So *just* to finish on the borders.”

7-“So I *just* want to tell you, she wants open borders.”

8-“ In Chicago, which has the toughest gun laws in the United States, *probably* you could say by far, they have more gun violence than any other city.”

9-“This is *just* another lie.”

10-“So I *just* left some high representatives of India”

11-“ I *really* want to *just* talk about something slightly different.”

12-“...I *just* have to...”

Adjectival is another device to indicate hedged performative. It is used by both speakers as a modifier to add more information to the whole sentence or to another adjective or a noun and describe what the speaker means. It is the least used device in the whole debate, twice by Clinton and once by Trump as in the following parts of their debate:

Clinton:

1-“This is one of the worst *possible* choices that any woman and her family has to make.”

2-“...it's *pretty* clear...”

3-“ It's *pretty* clear you won't admit...”

Trump:

1-“...I think it's *terrible*.”

The phrases *the kind of/ that kind of* as hedged performative devices are used by Clinton 13 times and once by Trump to express the situation when the speaker is not sure if what s/he says is sufficiently correct or not or it weakens the degree of being certain about the exact thing they mean, as shown in their following quotations:

Clinton:

1-“...what *kind of* country are we going to be? What *kind of* opportunities will we provide for our citizens? What *kind of* rights will Americans have?

2-“ ...and *the kind of* people that I would be looking to nominate to the court....”



3-“ There's other matters that I think are sensible that are *the kind of* reforms that would make a difference..”

4-“ *The kinds of* cases that fall at the end of pregnancy are often the most heartbreaking, painful decisions for families to make.”

5-“And using *that kind of* scare rhetoric is just terribly unfortunate.”

6-“That's *the kind of* approach that will work.”

7-“ ...but it is *the kind of* approach that will enable more people to take those new jobs,...”

8-“That's *the kind of* approach that is just not going to work.”

9-“ ...we don't want to have *the kind of* pitting of people one against the other...”

10-“ ...we can have *the kind of* serious negotiation necessary to bring the conflict to an end and go forward on a political track.”

Trump:

1-“ You take a look at the kind of numbers that that will cost us in the year '17, it is a disaster.”

The final device is ‘Subordination’ (if clause) which is used to show the possibility of the action whether it is a promise or any action by the candidates at the time of election campaign. This device can be seen much more in Trump’s speech (18) times than in Clinton (only once).

Clinton:

1-“Well, let me translate that, *if* I can, Chris, because...”

Trump:

1-“*if* that would happen,...”

2-“*if* we put another two or perhaps three justice on..”

3-“ *If* we got along well,...”

4-“ *If* Russia and the United States got along well and went after ISIS, that would be good.”

5-“...well, *if* we have them, why don't we use them,...”

6-“*If* you become president, this country is going to be in some mess.”

7-“...*if* you look at what came out today on the clips where I was wondering what happened with my rally in Chicago...”

8-“*If* it wasn't, they get their 10 minutes of fame.”

9-“...*If* you look -- excuse me, Chris... “

10-“...*if* you look at your voter rolls, you will see millions of people that are registered to vote...”

11- “...*if* you look at what's happening, much tougher than they thought.”



12-“*If they did it by surprise...*”

13-“*And if you think that going into Mosul after we let the world know we're going in,...*”

14-“*If you think that was good, then you do.*”

15-“*If she did nothing, we'd be in much better shape.*”

16-“*If we don't repeal and replace now...*”

17-“*if I can't make a great deal,...*”

18-“*if we can't, we're going to do it...*”

4-Discussion of Results

Through the analysis of the final Trump- Clinton debate of the election process the following points are indicated as a result of the study depending on the information given in table (2). The most common function of the hedged performatives in the political debate by both is to show probability rather than certainty through the use of hedged devices such as the modal lexical verbs, modal auxiliary verbs, adverbial, adjectival and phrases as well as subordination. They lessen the degree of the certainty of an utterance which is regarded as a good point to be applied by political candidates during the election campaigns so as to avoid promises that may not be kept in the future.

The category of the hedged performatives	The frequency (Clinton)	The frequency (Trump)
1-The modal lexical verb	34	23
2-The modal auxiliary verb	35	33
3-Adverbials	7	13
4-Adjectival	3	1
5-Phrase	13	1
6-Subordination	1	18
Total Number	94	89

Table (2) The overall number of hedged performatives used by each candidate

1- The probability devices as modal lexical verbs *think* & *believe*, are used by both speakers to weaken the certainty of an utterance, as in table (1) above. Both speakers show possibility in their speech as they use ‘think’ which shows opinion or idea more than ‘believe’ which is used when they feel certain of what they say is true.

2- Concerning the modal auxiliary verbs, the speakers are different for Clinton does not use ‘must’ and ‘could’, but these two are used by Trump. The purpose of their use is different as ‘must’ is used when the speaker believes that something is certain but ‘could’ is used for talking about possible actions now. Meanwhile, Clinton uses ‘can’ for something that is possible or allowed. However, ‘will’, ‘would’, ‘should’ are the most frequently used ones by both.



- 3- The only mitigating device used is 'just' for (4) times by Clinton and (9) times by Trump.
- 4- The lexical items such as adverbs and adjectives are used as hedged devices by both. Clinton uses adjectives more and Trump adverbs.
- 5- The phrases *the kind of/ the sort of* are used by both for the purpose of avoiding commitment or precision as they are not sure of what they say exactly.
- 6- Subordination through *if clause* is another device used by Clinton once but (18) times by Trump while showing a real possibility or imagining a situation.
- 7- Accuracy is another good point by both as no promise is made directly but through the modals. There might be a kind of indirect promise that can be deduced from the context.
- 8- No certainty is shown in their debate which might create a kind of trust on the side of the voters/audience as they do not deceive the audience by promising something that they may not be able to do in the future.
- 9- The use of the same modal in the same quotation more than one time and keeping the consistency of the ideas shows the awareness of the speaker of what s/he says from the beginning till the end; i.e. if there is probability, it should be available everywhere and there should be no shift.
- 10- Semi modals such as *wish to, want to, have to, ...etc.* and Performative verbs as *ask, beg, command, beseech, declare...etc.* are used by none of them.

5-Conclusions

Depending on the results of the analysis of the debate, the following points are concluded:

- 1- Probability is the main concern in the political debate by both males and females.
- 2- Certainty is not given directly in political debates.
- 3- The frequency and the way of the use of the hedged performatives is different according to the gender:
 - a- Modal lexical verbs, modal auxiliary verbs, adjectival and phrases are mostly used by Clinton while subordination and adverbs specially mitigating device *just* are mostly used by Trump.
 - b- A mixture of the hedged performatives is used by Trump which is not found with Clinton.
- 4- The hedged performatives are used to avoid being too direct for the purpose of being polite.
- 5- They are used to reduce the risk of an utterance.
- 6- They are used as modifiers.
- 7- They make the speech more convincing for the audience.
- 8- They are used to avoid disagreement. They are real devices to weaken the force of an utterance as they are applied for the same purpose by different speakers.
- 9- They are used for the same purpose if used by one speaker giving a speech or by different speakers in debates.

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پوخته

لەر ابردودا زۆر لىكۆلىنەو له گۆشەنىگای جیاوازهو له سەر وتارى سىاسى كراوو وەبەشپكى گرتكى رەوانىيىزى دانراو وەمەبەستى دەربرىنى بېروراكانيان. زۆر جار سىاسىيەكان و كەسە ناودارهكان ئامرازەكانى رەوانىيىزان بەكارهيتاوه كە تپيدا ئامانجيان رازىكردى گۆنگرەكانيانە بۇ ئەوئە دەنگيان پى بدن لەهەلبۇاردندا لەرگەى بەكارهيتناني چەند ئامرازىكى زمانەوانىيەو وەك نامىشى لەوانەى كەبابەتى سەرەكى ئەم لىكۆلىنەوئە. ئامانجى ئەم لىكۆلىنەوئە بە ديارىكردى رۆلى نامىشى لەوانەىيە لە دىبەيتى سىاسى وەهەرەها كاريگەرى رەگەز لەبەكارهيتنلى ئەم ئامرازانەو تېشك خستە سەر ئەو ئامرازانەى كەزياتر بەكارهاتوون. بەمەبەستى گەيشتن بەئامانجى لىكۆلىنەوئەكە دووايىن دىبەيتى ئىوان دۆنالد ترامپ و هيلارى كلنتن هەلبۇردراو و شىكرەنەوئە بۆكراو. بەپشت بەستن بەشكرەنەوئە ئەنجامە بەدەستەتووهكان چەند خالىك بەدەستەتوون لەوانە گریمانە كەبابەتى سەرەكى دىبەيتەكەپەو هېچ دۇنيايەك بەدى ناكريت لەدىبەيتەكەياندا و كلنتن ئامرازەكانى زياتر لەترامپ بەكارهيتاوه لەووتەكانيدا. لىكۆلىنەوئەكە بەلستى سەرچاوه بەكارهاتووهكان كۆتايى هاتووه.

ملخص

النصوص السياسية قد تم تناولها من خلال جوانب مختلفة لمدة طويلة وتمثل جزءاً مهماً من علوم البلاغة. السياسيون والعوام بصفة عامة يقومون بتوظيف وسائل بلاغية للتعبير عن آرائهم وأفكارهم وتطلعاتهم بهدف إقناع الآخرين بما يريدون الوصول اليه من خلال الفنون البلاغية الإقناعية. تهدف هذه الدراسة الى التحري عن أساليب التحوط المستخدمة في المناظرات السياسية من خلال معرفة الفروق الدقيقة فيما بين كلا الجنسين في استخدامهم لهكذا نوع من الاساليب، إذ يكمن الغرض من مثل هذه المناظرات في عرض سياسات وآراء المرشحين والكشف عن أوجه النقد ضدهم أمام الناخبين. ولتحقيق أهداف هذا البحث، فقد تم اختيار آخر مناظرة سياسية ما بين كل من مرشحي رئاسة الولايات المتحدة الامريكية عام 2016 "دونالد ترامب" و"هيلاري كلنتون" لغرض تحليلها والتحري عن أساليب التحوط المستعملة من قبل الطرفين. وأظهرت النتائج أن أكثر أساليب التحوط هو الاحتمالية، وهذا الاسلوب كان أكثر استعمالاً من قبل كلنتون مقارنة بترامب؛ وفي نهاية البحث تم إدراج قائمة بأهم المصادر والمراجع التي تناولها البحث.